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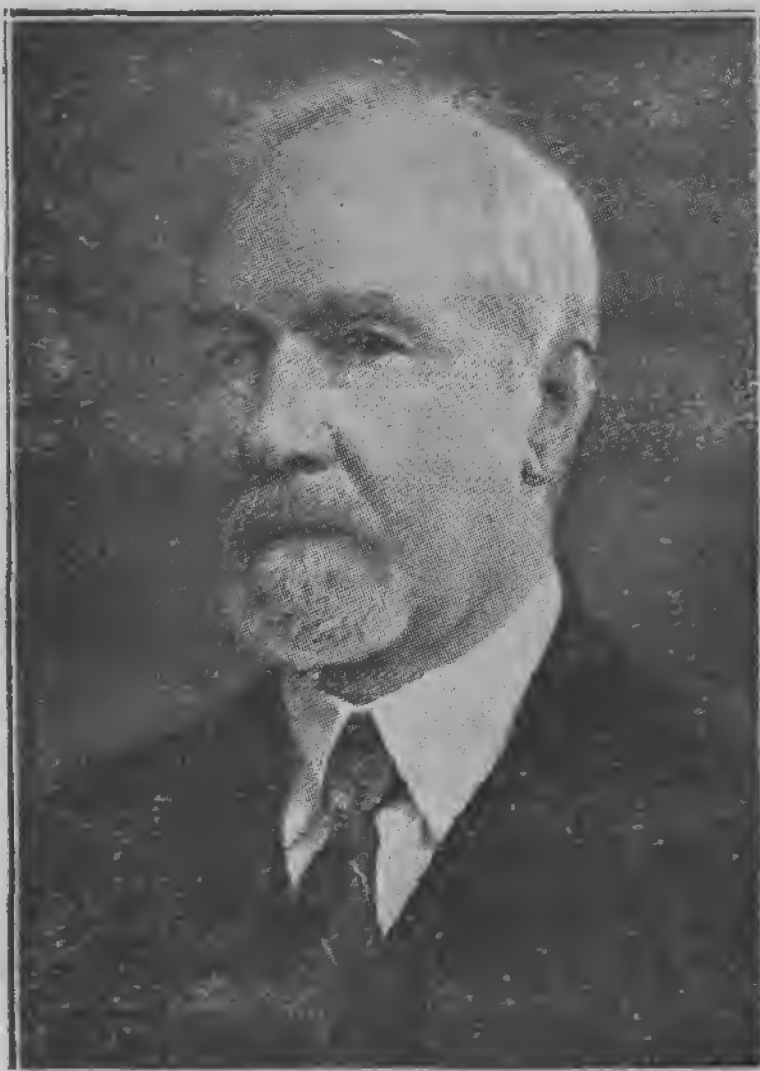
Bulgaria and her People

BY

P. M. Mattheeff

A happy nation, or a happy man, according to the psychological tendencies of human nature is soon forgotten when faced with trouble or adversity. The footpaths of their distinction, their proved capacities, and their influence are effaced, as soon as the hopes they forshadowed are obscured. So it is with Bulgaria. She was better known and more appreciated, when a young progressive country, was happy when, repeatedly she demonstrated her great value, her possibilities.

The knowledge of Bulgaria, now that she is in a large measure crushed by the disastrous results of the war, have apparently been obscured. Her value has been largely discounted and the hopes placed in her are almost turned to derision. There is no justification for such a change as regards Bulgaria, facts in themselves utter a protest. The defamatory campaign conducted assiduously and with increased energy during, and after the war, by her neighbours, is responsible for it.



The Writer

In order to properly understand the value of Bulgaria and her people one must learn and know that she—forgotten during five long centuries, — rose rapidly to the rank of a nation which gave the lead to the neighbouring States, to-day her calumniator, and which enabled them to attain their national ideals to a highly exaggerated degree.

The Bulgarian people lived during nearly five centuries dominated by the spiritual rule of the Constantinople Greek church, under which it was placed after the Turkish conquest, and the political rule of the conquerors. The spiritual subjection was more disastrous for the people, than its political independence, for the reason that it pursued, systematically, the effacement of its nationality. During this period the country was incorporated politically in the Greek element, and it was only in the year 1870 that the Bulgarians obtained the recognition of their rights to a national church. Up to this time it was officially considered as a limb, or belonging to the Roum Milet — the Greek people (a name borne by the Greeks of the Byzantine empire and given to them by the conqueror — the Turks).

The first spark which awakened the dormant national spirit of the Bulgarian people, was struck in the year 1772. This was when a monk in a monastery at Mount Athos wrote a short but very simple history of the people before the Turkish conquest. In the preface this monk dramatically appeals to its conscience, he invites them to remember their glorious past, to look forward to a brilliant future, and not be ashamed of themselves. This simple history was copied and recopied and extensively circulated amongst the people. Up to this time the people had apparently existed in oblivion, that they had a previous life independent of the Greek clergy or the Greek element (Roum'. The bishops were Greek, appointed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople which persecuted every effort for national education. Those who attempted action in such a direction were calumniated before the authorities as political conspirators. Every opposition shewn towards the bishops was considered as insubordination to the civil authorities. The following case illustrates more clearly the state of affairs which then existed. In 1833 a Bulgarian in the town of Philippopolis, a wealthy and influential man both with the Bulgarians and the Turks, determined to open a Bulgarian school. He communicated his intention to his friend the bishop, who listened to him and eventually replied — Tchorbadji (title given to Christians of importance) you know very well that I will place no difficulties in the way of your executing your plan, but in accordance with my instructions I will have to report the matter to the Patriarchate, that a Bulgarian has opened, or intends to open a Bulgarian school. The Patriarchate will not openly place any objection, later however, it will find a pretext to calumniate you before the authorities and you will be sent into exile. I strongly advise you to renounce your intention.

The first Bulgarian printing press was established in the year 1833 in Salonika. It was destroyed by fire after existing for a period of two years. Another Bulgarian attempted to re-establish it. He obtained permission on condition that he used the Greek alphabet, which was equal to a refusal. Such was the spiritual and to a large degree the political domination of the Greek over the Bulgarians from the conquest down to the year 1870. The difficulties against which the people had to work for their regeneration were immense. The Turkish Government recognised the Christian religion but ignored the national elements it included.

Reading and writing were taught down to the commencement of the 19th century by the monks and priests in monastery cells and those attached to the churches, and, directly from the printed church books. There were no organised schools, nor special books for instruction. The first elementary reader for beginners was published in 1824; the first book printed was in 1806 in Rumania, a book of prayers; the first short lived printing press was established in 1833 in Salonika; the first newspaper was published in Smyrna in 1836 with the help and under the protection of the American Missionaries. The writer remembers that in the fifties of the last century he learnt the ancient Slav letters which were written with a quill upon a piece of board which he carried slung round his neck, and how he learned to write on sand spread upon a board.

A question is very often asked—how is it the Bulgarian people, of all the peoples subjected to the Turks, was the last to claim rights of nationality and the last to obtain their liberty? This was due entirely to the fact that the Bulgarian people happened to occupy the most prominent and central part of the Balkan Peninsula, where the Turkish power was most strongly concentrated; that it was isolated from all direct contact or communications with the western world. Greece, Rumania and Serbia, were on the confines of the Turkish power and consequently were in direct communication with the countries beyond them.

The liberation of the Bulgarians took place in the year 1878, as a result of the Russo-Turkish war. The people naturally were far from being prepared for a free and independent life; they were lacking competent men for administrative and judicial positions. In consequence, schoolmasters, merchants or trades men, grocers etc., were called upon to fill administrative, and even judiciary posts. The only instruction a number of these persons had had in governing or administrative work was what they obtained during the one year of Russian occupation. During the first years of independent life the country depended upon foreigners for professional work.

In a period of fifty years the country and people have been transformed, a modern state has grown out of the initial chaos, the country has no longer need of foreign help for professional services; as to education it rivals advantageously its older neighbours, in literacy it surpasses all of them. In the space of seven years the people of the Principality and East Rumania (now South Bulgaria) declared their union in defiance of the Berlin Treaty, and in opposition of the particular policy of Russia, and the two countries united drove back the Serbian invaders, intent upon teaching a young nation to have more respect for treaties in the interest and plans of those who arrogated to themselves the right to guide its conduct. The people worked patiently and perseveringly to consolidate its independence and succeeded to elect Prince Ferdinand in succession to Prince Alexander, who had been dethroned by powerful foreign influence. Twelve years later it proclaimed its complete independence, and established the third Bulgarian Kingdom. Within five years of this last event it took the leading part in the coalition with Serbia, Montenegro and Greece against the common oppressor, conducted the campaign with success, winning the decisive battles. All this success obtained by the people was not due to diplomacy (in diplomacy it proved itself on numerous occasions to be weak) but to the solid sterling qualities of the people, to its patience and perseverance, and to its force of character.

The country has recently undergone or passed through severe disasters. Its leaders committed serious errors. From the first place amongst its neighbours, it has been reduced to the last, and is condemned to bear only burdens. A sudden unexpected misfortune however cannot destroy the virtues which enabled the people to accomplish, with valour, so much. These virtues still exist; they are waiting for the time to manifest themselves to again direct the destiny of the nation; they have not in vain preserved the nation from the Greek spiritual and Turkish political rule, endured for so many centuries. Facts are facts. There is no reason for any change of opinion regarding Bulgaria and her people or for lessening the appreciation once held for the capacities of its people, on account of recent misfortunes. Misfortunes come and go; the character which creates and establishes a nation persists. Calumnious reports are spread

and are easily accepted and adopted. Such is the case with Bulgaria, particularly to-day when she is overburdened with obligations, constrained to remain silent and endure in silence and stoically privation of rights and flagrant injustice, struggling against overwhelming impositions and particularly the haughty, even tyrannical and destructive policy of her neighbours, not one of whom is willing to fulfil its obligations towards her, as defined in the Peace treaty. Meanwhile the worth of the Bulgarian people which it possessed before its recent misfortunes, I again repeat, are still there — its efforts are more or less stifled, its love for progress, however, has not diminished. These are paramount reasons for which it should be considered to be as worthy to-day as before its misfortunes and even more so, in view of the disadvantageous conditions to which she is obliged to submit in working for the recovery of her losses due more to fate than to faults or errors committed.

The death of Lord Gladstone

The news of the death of Lord Gladstone on the 5th instant was received with sincere regret throughout Bulgaria. It was only in 1927 when His Lordship and Lady Gladstone visited the country and the keen interest which he had taken in Bulgarian affairs left a deep impression upon the minds of those who had the pleasure of meeting and conversing with him. There were few Englishmen who had a better grasp of Balkan affairs nor its problems than Lord Gladstone, and who had followed up the work of his illustrious father. The gratitude of the nation on this occasion was fully manifested when over 30 000 people, mainly Macedonian emigrants, marched past the hotel and greeted the distinguished guests as they stood on the balcony for over two hours whilst the various organizations passed.

The names of William Gladstone and James S. Bouchier are household names throughout the Kingdom and in almost every city, town and village, there are either streets, schools, libraries, or societies named after one of these great Englishmen. Added to this scroll will now be the name and memory of Lord Gladstone, who had worked so unflinchingly towards seeing the work of his illustrious father consummated.

Whilst in Sofia, His Lordship was presented with an illuminated address from the Council and members of the Bulgarian British Association, and both he and Lady Gladstone were made the first Honorary members of the Association.

At a meeting of the Council held on the 7th instant a resolution was passed conveying to Lady Gladstone the sincere condolence of the Association in her great loss.

The Mayor and Sofia City Council published a Necrologe for the deceased and the Mayor telegraphed to Lady Gladstone the condolence of the City in her bereavement. A number of telegrams, from the Director and pupils of the Gladstone High School, named after the great benefactor, and other institutions and societies both in the capital and the provinces, were despatched to Lady Gladstone.

By the demise of Lord Gladstone Bulgaria loses a sincere friend; and our Association its first honorary member.

Personal and Social

Lieut Col Corfe, President of the Greek — Bulgarian Mixed Commission, arrived in the capital from Athens on duty and remained several days.

On 7th March the Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Atanas Bouroff received in audience the Resident Minister's of Hungary, Yougoslavia, Greece, Italy and Mr T. Kodding Charge D'Affaires of U. S. A.

On the 13th March His Excellency the British Minister was received in audience by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

A group of 23 professors of Philology from the University of Warsaw, Poland, who are making a tour of the Balkans and Greece will visit Bulgaria on the 22nd April and remain for 10 days studying the country.

The Mayor of Boyano, near Sofia, has received a letter of thanks from Mr Charles Buxton on behalf of himself and others for the honour conferred by the Boyano Town Council in naming the main Boulevard „Buxton Brothers“.

His Majesty the King accompanied by his brother and sister Prince Kyril and Princess Eudoxia, paid a private visit to the Aksakoff Salon, where an interesting Caricature exhibition is being held, consisting of the works of several prominent Sofia caricature artists.

The Sofia social season was concluded with Carnival week, which started on the 1st March, and included a number of fancy dress masked balls, private dinner parties and dances, and receptions. The traditional masked ball given by the „Sofia Jockey Club“ and the „A. C. 23 Football Club“ were two of the gayest and most popular functions of the season. The Architects fancy dress ball was held in the beautiful ball room in the new Engineer and Architects Club, which was recently opened by His Majesty the King.

On March 2nd a concert, under the patronage of the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Vasoff, was given in the large Salon of the Military Club, by several young promising Bulgarian musicians, Miss Maria Stephanova, Nedja Todorova, Mr. M. Lefteroff, M. Balkansky, A. Boueloff, and I Yankoff. The programme consisted of works by Chopin, Wagner, Beethoven Debussy and Paganini. The hall was packed to overflow by the Sofia music loving public, and the applause accorded to each artist indicated the appreciation shown by the audience, and the state of efficiency these rising young artists have reached.

The mixed Choir of the Royal Academy of Music comprising sixty five members, gave a concert, under the patronage of H. R. H. Princess Eudoxia, on the 16th March, consisting of Lenten music.

The Choir whose numbers are rapidly augmenting is now preparing Oratorios, the 9th choral symphony by Beethoven, and cantatas. The music loving public will from now be able to hear and enjoy the choral works of the great Masters. The Academy choir but adds another laurel to the musical culture of the nation.

On 3rd March the Royal Academy Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Prof. Sasho Popoff, gave its 7th concert. The programme included the overture Euryanthe by Weber, and the Pastoral Symphony by Beethoven. The chief number, however, was „L'Oiseau de Feu“, by the well known Russian composer, Stravinsky. Despite the delicate technique which predominates throughout this work, the orchestra acquitted itself most creditably and brought out the rich colour effects which the composer demands.

English Speaking League

The Annual General Meeting of the English Speaking League was held on the 13th March. The President Lieut Col E. V. Sydenham D. S. O., was in the chair and over 100 members were present. The President's report indicated the satisfactory progress which the League has made during the last year. The membership from 286 in 1928 increased to 359. The Treasurer's report also shewed the satisfactory financial position of the League. The reports of the Secretary and Treasurer were unanimously approved and the Budget for the new year voted.

The splendid reading Library which the League now possesses consists of 2850 volumes of reading matter to suit the taste of all classes of readers, and is the largest library of English books in the Balkans.

The new spacious and comfortable premises which were opened in September last have now been furnished and are now a Club which provides all the comforts required.

The Friday „Tea Dances“ which are held during the winter season have been most successful and provided entertainment specially for the younger generation. On each occasion one of the ladies of the League acts as hostess and provides afternoon tea. A special room has been set aside for cards and ping pong, and the main hall is sufficiently large for dancing. An amateur Jazz-orchestra is now being organised by several members who play instruments and after Easter will supply the music for dancing.

The educational side of its activities is now also being developed. Special evening classes for learning the English language have been opened, under a competent English teacher, Mrs Georgieff, and are now being attended by 23 pupils.

The new Council elected for the year, are

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Lieut Col E. V. Sydenham D. S. O.

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The Population etc.

The superficial area of Bulgaria is 103,146 square kilometers.

The population at the end of 1929 was 5,766,000, of which 2,859,800 were males and 2,847,100 females, with a density of 55.9 per square kilometre, or an increase in population of 117,000 as compared with 1928.

During the year 55,896 marriages were solemnized 185,026 children were born. 98,658 deaths were registered.

The population in 1881 was 2,880,000 or 39.4 per square kilometre; 1911—4,337,300 or 45.3 per sq. kilom, 1921—4,846,971 and in 1927, 5,478,741, with a density of 53.7 per sq. kilometre.

The Women's Movement in Bulgaria

BY

M-rs D. Ivanoff

President Woman's Federation

Its Aims

The Bulgarian women's organization represents the movement which is established throughout the country. It unifies the women's Associations in all the cities and towns which are working for a common purpose — the defence, the interests, and the rights of women.

These Associations were in existence even before the liberation of the people from slavery. They had been created during the time of the national struggles of the people for its spiritual and political liberty from Greek domination and, Turkish rule. This was between the years 1860 — 1870. The male element had founded reading rooms which were typical of the cultural and educational institutions formed for the spiritual development of the people, where the Bulgarians gathered for the purpose of learning and fostering the national spirit. At the sametime he more awaked women also founded bodies or societies through which they could educate their sisters and through them eventually develop the general culture of the nation.

The enlightenment of women was the first and main purpose of the Associations and through these they cultivated in them all the social virtues, such as charity, social service, and all that which comes within the sphere of womens activity. At the sametime these societies rendered great assistance in the revolutionary struggles for the liberation of the people.

In order to fulfil their object special lectures for women were arranged, schools were founded and supported, they assisted in the construction of educational institutions, placed and supported deserving young women in different cultural institutions, both in the country and abroad, preparing them for teachers and other useful handicraft.

The war of liberation temporarily stopped the activity of the societies, but these activities were revived with increased vigour immediately after the creation of the new Bulgaria in 1878. New societies were founded with the main purpose—the enlightenment of the women, and charity. The activity consisted of opening evening classes and sunday s hools for the illiterate women and children; lectures on all womens subjects, social meetings etc.; providing poor pupils with food, clothing and books; supporting orphanages and homes for the aged; free soup kitchens for the poor; childrens creches, and other benevolent work. Charity work occupies the most important place in the movement. It has been acknowledged that whatever has been done within the spheres mentioned above it is due in a large measure to the work and influence of the womens societies. In addition to the work outlined above there is a third activity which has been developed, namely, professional schools for girls have been opened, in which poor girls are being trained in a profession. To-day over 20 women's, societies support such schools and classes.

Its Progress

The extent of the work done by the these organizations can be measured by the fact that only recently the State has become interested and opened three similar schools for girls, which remain far behind in the proficiency reached by the professional school „Maria Louisa“ founded by the womens society „Mother“ in Sofia, and those of the societies in Philipopolis. Rustchuk and other centres. So that we can see the womens societies in Bulgaria created their own definite field of activity, i. e. the enlightenment of women, charitable work, and professional schools.

Out of these societies the womens Federation was created. This was brought about, on the one hand, when the economic conditions of life began to force women to leave their homes and seek employment in order to earn their living and help with the support of the family, and on the other hand, when certain limitations had been placed upon the education of women. The girls gymnasiums were left with a



27-th Women's Congress
held at Sofia — May — 1929

smaller course of studies, due to which the then newly opened Free University refused to accept girls from such schools. In addition to this certain limitations with regard to the work to be undertaken by women also began to be imposed.

In 1899 from the midst of these societies came the initiative for unification, for the express purpose — the defence of women's rights. In 1900 this question had been discussed by a meeting of delegates representing twenty societies, and in 1901 the Bulgarian Women's Federation was founded. Its principal activity was the intellectual, moral and economic uplifting of the women of the country and improve their position in every way possible. By this it was understood, placing women on an equality with men. — the phrase „equal rights“ could not be put nor declared openly, as a purpose, owing to the phrase being strange to the general conception of

Leaders of the Women's Movement



Mrs D. Ivanoff
President Women's Federation



Mrs Reda Stalicki
(one of the Founders of the women's movement and
former President)
Honorary member



Mrs Julia Malinoff
(Founder Bulgarian Women's Federation)
Honorary President



Mrs Catherine Karaveloff
(A leader and life worker in the movement)
Honorary Member

women, also it was even dangerous at that time to suggest.

The conditions of life, however, made it imperative for the Federation to put in its ultimate aim — equal rights for women. In 1921, after further changes which were brought about by the war, it put in the forefront of its programme—equal political and civil rights.

The purpose of the women's movement to-day therefore is

(a) To work for acquiring equal civil rights for women, necessary for her through wide and free expression.

(b) To create and maintain a constant and conscious interest towards all social, cultural, economic and political questions of the country.

In addition to the foregoing, the Federation embraced the idea for peace, worked assiduously for infusing this idea in the minds of members and for its wide propagation.

The Women's Federation which was founded by different womens organizations, can now claim 72 societies, of which 62 are in cities and towns, and 10 in villages, with a membership of 8000. In 1926, it celebrated its 26th anniversary. At the celebrations the President and founder of the Federation, Mrs Julia Malinoff (wife of the former Prime Minister) was elected to the position of Honorary President, and Mrs D. Ivanoff was elected President. On the same occasion Mrs Catherine Karaveloff, Mrs Reda Staliska and Mrs K. Konovo were elected honorary members.

The propaganda of the Federation is voiced through its weekly publication entitled „The Womans Voice“, founded 27 years ago, with 6000 subscribers.

For the realization of its aims the Federation works directly with petitions, meetings, lectures etc., through its different societies aspiring, through the activities of these organisations, women to enter with their co-operation into all the phases of social life.

Founded as a purely femanist organization, the Federation stands aloof from all party or class organizations, works for the equal rights of women irrespective of class or social distinction; criticises the actions of all parties whether government or opposition whenever such actions are preudicial to womens interests, or are opposed to the freedom and rights of citizens, peace, etc.,

The Federation admits women as members who hold varied political opinions, with the guiding thought, however, that there is no place in it of any kind for partisanship, but only a common struggle against the position of women, for greater justice towards women, men, and the citizen.

With this the Federation brings a great asset to the political life of the country, i. e., to prepare the women to work in spite of the different political opinions for any purpose effecting women, the family and the people.

The Bulgarian Womens Federation succeeded after all other attempts failed in the formation of the womens organizations in the country. It placed itself above them and formed itself into a solid institution, always expressing the sufferings and aspirations of the women and a more happy life for the people. It received the necessary social acknowledgment as an organised representative of

the Bulgarian women and took its place amongst the common culturâl, educational and national work of all the social organisations in the country. It has created communications with similar organizations in foreign countries. It is a member of two of the greatest women's organisations „The International Council of women“, whose President is the Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, and of the „International Alliance of Women“ the President of which is Mrs Margory, I. Corbett Ashley. Through these communications the Federation works as a representative for international initiative against injustice towards women and nations. It works conscientiously with the responsibility it maintains for the future of the woman of the whole world.

*

It should be pointed out the Bulgarian women are better placed concerning their civil rights than many of their sisters in foreign countries. They enjoy comparative broad rights, which they retain even after marriage. It is sufficient to state that there are equal conditions laid down for men and women upon their entering into marriage, and these same conditions apply for divorce, with a very slight difference. They are subject to property rights when married and remain master of their property and dispose of it as they think fit, without it being necessary to have the agreement of the husband. It should be mentioned, however, that there are limitations effecting them under the civil and commercial laws which have been introduced, and taken from foreign laws, and used as the model for the Bulgarian law. These limitations are against the customary law, according to which the women, as a daughter is an equal inheritor with the male members of any property left by the parents. With the amendment in the Inheritance Law in 1906, the woman was unjustly treated in regard to „rural“, property, taking but one third against two thirds by the male issue. The same thing happened with the law for „Trusteeship“ which was again against the customary rights, depriving women of the right to act as a Trustee, retaining this right only for the mother or grandmother of the children. The commercial law also brought about limitations, which provided that a married woman could not engage in any business without the consent of the husband, which could be given either in writing or orally, whilst if she were not in business she could dispose with full liberty her property and make any transactions she desired with it.

It is not so, however, with political rights, so far as women being employed in either the State or municipal services. In this there are no limitations by law. Women have been teachers even before the liberation and after liberation continued to enjoy and exercise thier rights with men. From the time of liberation, 52 years ago, women have qualified as physicians and now hold State and County appointments and in hospitals. From 1880 women have held apointments in the Postal and Telegraph services; from 1910 in State banking institutions and the war has opened the doors of a number of State social services for women.

To-day she meets a great many difficulties in holding appointments in all of these different

Monthly Review of Books and Periodicals

In the short period of fifty years since its liberation, Bulgaria has been able to create quite a large and broad literature in almost every field of literary creation. Although a country not exceeding a population of 5,700,000, it can claim many writers and poets, a number of which enjoy European fame.

In the present economic condition of Bulgaria the „intelligentsia“ is probably in a worse condition than any other section of its social life. In spite of this, however,

institutions. This, however, is not due to any law but on account of the difficult financial position of the country, the great unemployment and still greater economic crisis, which have deprived many men of work.

Women in Bulgaria have no access to juridical appointments although there is no special law against it. This has not created any difficulty in having a woman appointed as a Judge representative of the country in the Italo-Bulgarian Arbitration Court at Rome (Miss B. Radolova).

The women in Bulgaria up to now do not enjoy the right of becoming a Lawyer or advocate, although for 25 years they have been allowed to graduate at the Law Faculty at the State University. With the purpose of allowing her to exercise these rights a bill was introduced into the National Assembly, with the approval of the Prime Minister. This bill has passed the first reading and will shortly become law.

The Bulgarian woman enjoy no electoral suffrage. The only right they enjoy is to be elected on the council of school boards, which are autonomous institutions under municipalities. This right was admitted by the law of national education passed in 1908, which stipulates however that every woman elected must possess a gymnasium or high school education, which for men is not required.

The number of women elected on school boards was greater during the years 1920-21 when after the material and moral disruption of the world war, the co-operation of all was required without the distinction of sex.

During this time the various political parties, upon their own initiative, inserted in their programmes women's suffrage and altered their statutes to the effect that women members were accepted. Due to this women's groups within the several parties were formed. All this, however, has remained without any tangible benefits for women, as the difficult position created as a consequence of the war and the peace treaties has engaged the attention of all the leaders of the Political parties. Although the responsible authorities have not continued in principal, their measures for ensuring the rights of women and enable them to take part in the political life of the country, it is only due to the fact that more important and imperative questions await being solved. Whilst waiting for the solution of this important question it is necessary for the women to co operate and solidify their position. Having its Federation to support its activities the women of Bulgaria are not discouraged; they are working and will continue to work until they succeed.

the interest towards literature and the arts is so great that most meagre comforts are sacrificed for books and magazines, or exhibitions, concerts and theatre tickets.

Literary, Bulgaria lives to-day a very active life. Books are currently published, also magazines and other periodicals followed by the intelligent section with keen interest. While some of the publications deal with subject matter more or less of a purely local national character, others represent a broader outlook on life with a deeply psychological background.

Beginning with the present issue, we propose to give each month, a short review of books and magazines published during the month, and thus keep our readers informed of the current literary activities and development of Bulgaria.

„The Renaissance of the Bulgarian People“ by Dr. P. Nicoff, published by S. Slavcheff, 352 pages, price 100 leva.

This is one of the most interesting books published lately. It clearly pictures the struggles of the Bulgarians for their national and cultural independence and liberty. It portrays also the important role played by the church in this struggle, by virtue of which the latter is considered as a national factor in Bulgarian history. The whole story of this period is most vividly and convincingly told.

The general impression one receives from the book is that throughout this dark period of Bulgarian history the church has been the guard in preserving the national spirit, language and tradition of the people, which has been oppressed and suppressed politically, socially, and spiritually.

„The Far Away land“ by Ivan Mirtcheff, — a collection of poems. Stara Zagora. 98 pages, price 40 leva.

One of the young Bulgarian poets, Ivan Mirtcheff has made a very good impression with this collection of poems which shew the whole earnestness of his growing spirit and expanding vision. There is something in him which makes us think that with a little more penetration he may be able to take a high place amongst his contemporaries. He has already obtained a high poetic feeling, rich with all sincerity and modesty of thought. In some of his poems we find a very deep sense, conceived in beautiful language, — a tear drop here, a crying sorrow there, or a soul revealing prayer, whispered in meditative tones.

Mr Ivan Mirtcheff is a promising poet and we look forward for his next work.

„Stories“ volume 1, by G. P. Stamatoff, published by Dr G. Marinoff, Sofia.

As a story writer Mr Stamatoff holds one of the first places in Bulgarian literature. He does not compose nor invent his stories. No. He reproduces life itself with the hand of the master. With all the beauty of art and sincerity of thought he draws before us the true picture of life as we see it with our own eyes. He is so successful in his task because he feels the pulse of life in its fullness. Nothing misses his penetrating view, nothing escapes his observing and far seeing eye. He does not describe nor talk about things; he lets his characters speak, converse and act before the eyes of the reader, who is captivated by the reality and lucidity of the story.

But the life which the author portrays in his stories is not the life of which he approves. Reading between the

lines, we can easily reveal the great sorrow, pains and disappointments he experiences and so bitterly feels at the ugliness and meanness of life. In him we see the dreamer and the idealist ever inspiring towards the heights of life, towards the everlasting beauty, justice, and harmony for which his spirit is so earnestly longing.

„Dramatic Visions“ by Boyan Danovsky Sofia, 1929.

Danovsky is a poet of high artistic attainments. He is a man of much wider scope than many of his contemporaries. His interests in life are many and his spirit big and expansive. He is not afraid to face the big problems of life which he wishes to solve with the wisdom of the sage. He has felt all the pains and disappointments of life, and his visions are nothing but the anxieties and the aspirations of his long suffering heart. They are a lyrical confession of the author full with pathos, beauty, and nobility of thought. There is a power and freshness in his language, which comes directly from his heart, saturated with the warmth and sincerity that is in it.

Dramatic Visions is a good and inspiring book to read and with more than local interest.

Amongst the other books recently published we shall only make mention of:

„First Furrows“ by Dobri Nemiroff. A novel Sofia 1929.

„The call of the Fatherland“ The cultural path of the Bulgarians, by K. Guluboff, Sofia 1930, 110 pages, price 40 leva.

„The Gold Mine“ A comedy in four acts by St. L. Kostoff, Sofia, 134 pages, price 40 leva.

„The Golden Cradles“ Poems for children by Elin Pelin. Illustrated, Sofia 46 pages, price 20 leva.

Periodicals

„Bulgarska Kniga“ (The Bulgarian book) is the name of the new bibliographical magazine published by T. Th. Tchipeff, and edited by T. Boroff. Amongst the very interesting articles and notes in this issue (the first) there is an article by Professor Dr. Alexander Balabanoff on „The Place of Bulgarian Literature“ in which the author making an extensive survey of Bulgarian literature since the liberation, and comparing it to the literature of European countries, states, that, as soon as it will become known to the European countries, the Bulgarian literature will rise both in prominence and importance and take its place amongst the literatures of other countries.

„Bulgarska Missal“ (Bulgarian thought) No. 2, vol. 5 Edited by Professor N. Arnaudoff.

The more important contents of this number are: „Guests“ a short story by Vlad. Polyanoff; Christo Boteff and the Bulgarian national songs, by At. Daltcheff; Pages from the national re-awakening, by T. Yankoff; the bridge of Struma, ballad, by St. Tchilingiroff etc.

„Hyperion“ No. 9 and 10, vol. 8. Edited by T. Trayanoff, with the following contents: The day of Ivan Vasoff, by Iv. Radoslavoff; P. K. Yavoroff, a social-psychological sketch D. St. Dimoff; Without a country, a story by V. Ivanoff; Edgar Allen Poe, by P. Spasoff; Walt Whitman, by C. D. Chacaroff; poems by various contemporaries, book reviews and notes.

„Zlatorog“ (The Golden Horn) No. 1 Vol. 11. Editor V. Vassilieff. Associate Editors, N. Lillieff and Sirak Skitnic.

Its main contents are: The Treasure of the Bulgarian language, by Prof. St. Mladenoff; songs of Venice, by E. Bagriana; „The two“ short story by N. Rainoff; Music and life by A. Stoyanoff etc.

„Otetz Paissy“ (Father Paissy) Fortnightly, published by the All Bulgarian Union, whose purpose is to keep alive the national spirit and to foster the national aspirations. Chief Editor, Professor C. Balamezoff. Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4. Vol. 3 The main articles are, „What have the Macedonians given to the Bulgarian race“ by G. Traitcheff; The Bulgarians under foreign rule, by V. T. Veltcheff; Professor Weigand for Macedonia, and the Macedonian question“ by Professor Dr. Iv. Georgoff;

„Macedonian Review“ Published by the Macedonian Scientific Institute No. 3, Vol. 5, with many articles dealing with the Macedonian questions from different aspects.

„La Revue Bulgare“ No. 5, and 6 Vol. 11. A bi-monthly review of Bulgarian affairs (in French) Edited by Professor Dr. A. Georgoff, Professor G. P. Ghenoff and Professor Dr. B. Filoff, with the following contents — The development of Bulgaria, by Dr. I. Gheorhoff; Democracy and Minorities by Professor Il. Yanouloff; The Scientific Institutions and Museums in Sofia, by B. Dimitroff; Legislation on rural property in Southern Dobrudja, by Dr. I. Penakoff; One year of minority regime in Dobrudja, by Dr. I. Kustendjaleff etc.

C. D. C.

Opera, and Drama

Opera.

During the month of February two new operas have been rehearsed — „Don Juan“ by Mozart, and „Der Freischutz“ by Weber. The Opera „Aida“, which is a favourite with the Sofia musical public, was produced for the first time during the present season on the 20th February, on a scale hitherto not attempted in Sofia.

The celebrated Bulgarian Tenor, Peter Raitchoff, who is paying a short visit to the capital, has given performances in the leading role of operas in which he has gained fame in European capitals, namely „Carman“ „The Barber of Saville“, „La Traviata“ and „Madame Butterfly“.

In order to produce the great works of Mozart and Weber, the Direction of the National Theatre requested the Direction of the Royal Prussian Opera to secure the services of a musical director. Mr. Hermann Stange who received the appointment, arrived in the city at the end of February and is now rehearsing the Operas named. Both operas are being produced on a scale, musically and technically, in all respects to that to be found in the large opera houses in European capitals. It will be the first time in the history of Bulgaria that the works of Mozart or Weber have been produced.

Drama.

During the month two new comedies were produced from the pen of Bulgarian authors, namely „She and the two“ by Stephan L. Kostoff, and „The Millionaire“ One of the most popular dramas produced during the season has been „The Trial of Mary Duggan“ and it continues to hold the boards. „Lady Windermere's Fan“ has also won the hearts of the theatre public and plays to packed houses.

General Review of Cultural Bulgaria

Part IV

Bulgarian Literature after Liberation

BY

Nikola Donicheff

The national struggles for political liberty and independence conducted with force and energy by Rakovsky, Karaveloff, Boteff and many other pioneers gave an impulse for revolutionary literature, which found in the person of Christo Boteff its greatest and most talented representative.

The revolutionary struggles prepared the ground for liberation, raised the spirit of the people, and inspired them with faith for the future; however the powerful Turkish empire which had existed for ages, had to be attacked by force. A handful of fearless revolutionaries, lead by Vassil Levsky, Christo Boteff, Hadji Dimitre, Stephan Karadja, and others, who perished in the struggle, manifesting a rare self-denial and heroism, could not subdue the numerous

new paths in its development. The revolutionary pathos which dominated the works of writers had to be replaced with a new creative inspiration.

After realising its political liberty and independence the young Bulgarian nation was faced with a new and persistent struggle for its development and education. The five centuries of slavery had naturally curtailed its cultural development and now all, especially the „intelligensia“ had to mobilise its efforts and energy in order to reach the stage its neighbours had by this time attained.

This cultural struggle, however, soon brought about satisfactory results. Despite the fact that the culture of the people had been subdued during these five long centuries they quickly succeeded in overcoming all the difficulties in a short time and reached the state of culture of their neighbours, taking an important place amongst them.

Within a period of 50 years, Bulgaria succeeded to reach a state of cultural advancement and to create so many cultural assets that it can be stated without fear of contradiction that it occupies to-day first place (culturally) amongst the Balkan States.

Together with the other changed phases in the cultural life of the country, literature also begins a new period in its development. After the liberation, poetry acquired new sources for inspiration, new motives to work upon. Due to the importance of a series of other cultural tasks which were more closely connected with the governing of the country, literature was for a time given second place. In the dawn of our free life, immediately after liberation, when great interest was being taken in the organisation of the new State we see the appearance of a number of news papers, representing different political principles, and conducting a persistent fight for their realisation. Political parties were organised, each one of which had its programme and organ. Together with the political material published, in these papers there was a special department for literature. In the beginning this was small, but gradually with the stabilising of the political life, literature begins to take a more important part in the life of the newspapers. In addition to these publications, we see the appearance of many periodical magazines devoted to the fine arts and science. From this time Bulgarian writers start a fruitful and broad activity which soon finds many supporters and readers.

The best known representative of literature after the liberation, who centres in his creative works all the artistic height and importance of the new Bulgarian poetry, is Ivan Vassoff (1850—1921). As a poet, novelist and dramatist, Vassoff develops his varied and rich literary activity with a great poetic talent. Deriving his inspiration from personal impressions taken from the contemporary reality of life, as well as from the history of the Bulgarian people, Vassoff created a series of artistic works which mark a new stage in the development of the Bulgarian literature and sharply defined the boundary line between the literature before and after liberation. Grown up in the epoch of slavery, seen the trend of so many national fighters and the victorious march of the Russian armies, he had at his disposal



Pentcho Slaveikoff
(1866—1912)

Turkish hordes, which mercilessly were endeavouring to stem any attempt for rebellion, and eventually Russia, the great Slav protector, had to come to the assistance. In 1878 Russia declared war on Turkey, which resulted in the liberation of the Bulgarian people from the Turkish yoke. The liberation of the country changed fundamentally the conditions of life. The first care of the newly created State was the organization of its government and administration in order to overcome the many difficulties, which had presented themselves, due to the lack of competent personnel, who were called upon to take up the difficult and responsible task of governing the country,

The new conditions which were imposed effected also literature, which had to change its direction, and to look for

a rich source for a creative inspiration. In his poems, stories, novels, and dramatic works Vasoff creates and portrays all that which he has witnessed, or for which he has read or heard.

Ivan Vasoff is to the Bulgarian people, what Tennyson is to the people of England, while Christo Boteff, due to certain poetical motives, appears as a universal poet. Vasoff on the contrary, remains within the national frame. He is not inspired by broad human ideals and dreams, as Boteff, nor by the struggles of humanity. Boteff is an internationalist, and Vasoff a nationalist. Mainly on account of this, Vasoff appears as the purest representative of Bulgarian literature



Kiril Christoff

and the brightest reflection of the patriotic traditions of the national spirit.

The literary inheritance from Ivan Vasoff comprises great number of poetical collections, stories, novels and dramatic works. There is not a literary field which Vasoff has not explored. As a lyrical and epical poet he has written many poems, published in separate collections, a series of epical poems in which he sings about his native country — the beauties of nature, the pains, the misfortunes and the joys of the working people, about the great and bright figures of the renaissance and of the revolutionary epoch. The „Epopée of the Forgotten“ is a necklace of poetical pearls. No other poet has succeeded so brightly and inspiringly to recreate through fine artistic means the personages of Paissy, Rakovsky, Levsky and Benkovsky etc., as Vasoff has done. Not only in his poetry, but also in his prose, in his stories and novels, Vasoff pictures the Bulgarian life. His subjects he derives either from his contemporary reality or from the Bulgarian history. From the number of stories, and novels, which Vasoff has created, among those which are most known, is „Under the Yoke“. This novel translated into many foreign languages is at the same time an apotheosis of the Bulgarian people to liberate themselves from the chains of foreign oppression. As a continuation of „Under the Yoke“ is the novel „New Land“ in which the author portrays part of the political history of the people up to the Serbo-Bulgarian war (1885). In this novel there are

interwoven interesting episodes from life in the towns and there is felt the scent of the refreshing Balkan nature.

It is practically impossible to picture in a few lines the varied and literary work of Ivan Vasoff. We will add however, that it marks the beginning of the new Bulgarian literature. Vasoff was entirely a national poet. True to the traditions of the past he pointed out through his works the path which Bulgarian literature had to take. In the development of national literature, Vasoff stands as one of the main and strongest pillars. He is the only one of all the Bulgarian writers, who has succeeded to complete his literary activities and to bequeath to the coming generations a dear and worthy spiritual wealth. In September 1921 he died in Sofia, at the age of 71.

As a contemporary to Vasoff and whose works occupy a prominent place in Bulgarian literature are the poets Constantine Velichkoff (1857—1908) and Stoyan Michealovski (1856—1926). Velichkoff is a tender lyrical poet. He left a collection of beautiful poems, several highly valued literary essays, and translated into verse „The Inferno“ by Dante. His dramatic works, however, were not of great merit. Stoyan Michealovski appears as a satirical poet. His poetry is saturated with great thought, which is a reflection of his deep spiritual culture and of his philosophical views of life. He is as much a poet as a philosopher. However neither of these poets have exercised upon the minds of the younger generation of poets, such a powerful and beneficial influence as Ivan Vasoff.

Following in the steps of Vasoff, and under his influence begins to write the poet Kyril Christoff (1875). A



P. K. Yavoroff

deep lyrical poet, as he is, Christoff soon made his way, especially in his love lyrics. He has been termed the „Pearl lyric of Bulgarian literature“. Dr. K. Krusteff, the best known Bulgarian literary critic, wrote concerning his poems of love:

„If the reader wants to feel a mad passion, a bubbling „stream of viril life, let him open that little book „Trepeti“ („Heart throbbings) and read through it, and let him ask „himself whether he has read anything in his own language „more arousing, penetrating and impressive, than this“.

Kyriil Christoff is the author of many books of poetry and of an epical poem „The children of the Balkan“, of which up to the present, two volumes have been published. His charm as a poet, the power and originality of his poetic talent lies in his lyrics, in his erotic songs, which occupy an important place in contemporary literature.

A poet with new culture and esthetics, and with a new understanding is Pentcho Slaveikoff (1866—1912).

Slaveikoff is not only a poet, but he is above all a pioneer for new cultural attainments. Educated in Europe and influenced by the spirit and works of the great European poets and philosophers, he undertakes to transform the spiritual life of the country, to co-ordinate Bulgarian culture with that of European countries and to bring new life into the national literature. Beginning with small lyrical poems — his first collection of poems, „Maidens tears“ is published in 1878 — he quickly broadens the grasp of his poetical meditations, rises to high regions of poetic thought and creates a series of sublime poems, in which is manifested the spirit of the great poet and is felt the pulse of the heart of an inspired priest, at the Temple of Poetry. As a poet and thinker Slaveikoff had outgrown the surroundings from which he came and created a new world of poetical visions, creative ecstasy, and new emotions. He desired to infuse the universal element into Bulgarian poetry and remove it from the narrow national frame in order to bring it nearer to the spirit of European literature. His poetical works, the centre of which is the great epical poem, the „Kurvava Pecena“, is a true monument of beauty and art. He can claim all rights to be termed „Maitré“ (Teacher) of the most modern Bulgarian literature. The great Serbian Poet Yovan Dontchich termed him — „the poet of future generations“.

The poetical bequeathment of Slaveikoff cannot be compared in volume to that of Ivan Vasoff, but taken at its inner value, by the depth of its creative inspiration, and by the power of its influence, it stands undoubtedly higher than that of Vasoff. The works of Slaveikoff still remain to be studied, interpreted, and taught in the schools and the university.

His contemporary and friend is P. K. Yavoroff who passed away in the early years of his life, and who was the most temperamental amongst all the Bulgarian lyrical poets, but undoubtedly the most talented. A deep and penetrating lyrical poet, Yavoroff appeared on the literary arena with poems, written on personal and social themes. His poems, in which is felt the stream of deep experienced sentiments, are the glorious hymns of love and suffering. As a background of the poems of Yavoroff is the night, and their main motive, the suffering. The poetical works of Yavoroff are collected in a voluminous book, entitled „After the shadows of the clouds“. In some of these works he uses motives of a universal character and appears as a poet with a powerful creative spirit.

Amongst the most known representative writers of prose during this epoch, apart from Ivan Vasoff, are Aleko Constantinoff (1863—1897) the author of „Bae Ganyo“, which is a collection of separate stories, connected by the name and the adventures of the hero who represents a masterly conceived and humourously portrayed national Bulgarian type; T. G. Vlaikoff (1865 —) known more under the pseudonym of „Veseline“ the author of a series of stories, in which are portrayed pictures from life in the provinces; Anton Strashimiroff, a novelist and dramatist, who is a writer with a lively social interest. In his stories and novels, he pictures in a truthful and convincing manner scenes from the life of the common people, and from the political and social life of the country, shewing qualities of a sure and

sharp observer and of a resourceful and interesting artist with a wide grasp of the Bulgarian native spirit.

As a master in portraying the Bulgarian peasant life Elin Pelin stands out most prominently. He succeeded in winning the reading public and to become one of its most beloved and appreciated authors. Coming as he did from a peasant family, grown up in the patriarchal environments of the village, he gives magnificent pictures of village life. He now occupies an important place amongst the present day writers.

P. U. Todoroff is an excellent prose writer. As in the case of Elin Pelin, he looked for and found his subject matter in the life of the village. However, he could not portray the life or character of the village with the same vividness as Elin Pelin. Todoroff leaned more towards the romantic and idealistic. With a peculiar fondness he worked up subjects taken from national mythology, tales, legends and fables. His best works are his „Idyls“, beautifully written in a national spirit, through the medium of the language used by the common people.

In the following article we shall continue our review of the new Bulgarian literature bringing it up to the present day.

Bulgarian State Railways

The Director General's report on the working of the State railways for 1929, shews that there were 2,425 kilometers of broad gauge open lines, 155 kiloms, 75 c/m and 320 kiloms, 60 c-m gauge lines.

The rolling stock consisted of 440 locomotives of all types, 607 passenger coaches and 10,707 (covered and open) goods wagons. The improvement in the upkeep of locomotives and their mileage is noticable. In 1924—25 the engine mileage averaged 19,285 kilometres; 1927—28, 23,526 and in the year under review 25000. The rolling stock (goods) also shewed an improvement. In 1925—26 the kilometrage was 10,336, in 1927—28, 14,185 and for 1929 this latter figure will be considerably exceeded.

The passenger traffic shews but a slight improvement. In 1928, 8,346,419 passengers were carried, and in 1929, 8,729,000.

3,713,184 tons of goods traffic were transported, against 2,713,184 tons in 1928.

Parcels and baggage traffic consisted of 16,000 tons, as compared with 11,018 tons in 1925—6 and 14,000 for 1928.

The revenue each year continues to increase. The nett revenue in 1925—6 was 8.608 millions, leva (£12,750,000), 1927—8 one milliard, sixty nine millions, eight hundred thousand levass (£13,300,000). When the final figures for 1929 are published it is predicted they will exceed £14,000,000.

Working expenses, however, simultaneously increased. A large portion of the increase is due to renewals and repairs to locomotives and rolling stock damaged during the war. The working expenses in 1925—6 amounted to 580 millions leva, 1927—8, 749 millions, and the 1929 figure is expected to reach 800 millions.

In 1929 a new law was voted in Parliament, which gave complete autonomy to the railways, and removed it from the sphere of party politics. The effect of this change is now being felt. The railways are now placed upon a purely commercial basis and the budget provides for the creation of funds for
(Continued at Foot of page 13).

The Woollen Textile Industry in Bulgaria

In 1928 the National Bank of Bulgaria enquired into 29 large woollen textile undertakings, and according to the results obtained, the capital invested in these enterprises on December 31, 1928, amounted to 20,044,801 gold leva and was distributed as follows; real estate 695,350 gold leva (3.47%), constructions 7,528,797 gold leva (37.55%), and machinery 11,820,654 gold leva (58.98%).

The distribution of the capital by kind and capitalisation is given in the following tables:

KIND	Under-takings	1928	
	No	Gold leva	%
Private concerns	7	2,944,754	14.66
Joint Stock Coys	16	12,366,524	61.69
Unlimited Liability	5	4,274,928	21.33
Limited Liability	1	458,595	2.29
Total	29	20,044,801	—

CAPITALISATION	Under-takings	1928	
	No	Gold leva	%
From 20,000 — 50,000	2	87,245	0.44
" 100,000 — 150,000	1	118,191	0.58
" 150,000 — 200,000	1	167,779	0.84
" 200,000 — 500,000	8	2,645,237	13.20
Above 500,000	17	17,026,349	84.94
Total	29	20,044,801	—

The power producing plants of the large woollen textile industry in 1928 numbered 75 with an effective H. P. of 5,005, of which 49 were steam boilers, locomobiles and turbines, with an effective H. P. of 3,728; 12 Diesel engines, with an effective H. P. of 857.8; internal combustion engines with an effective H. P. of 353; and 6 water-wheels with an effective H. P. of 67.

The electrical motors employed, numbered 79 with an effective H. P. of 1,885.

The number of the mechanical looms employed in 1928 were 765, self-factors 168, and 35,210 spindles.

The number of workers employed in these undertakings in 1928 were 3,878, of which 2,040 were men and 1,830 women.

The number of wage-days was 993,635 for which 2,016,547 gold leva were paid. The average daily wage amounted to 2.03 gold leva.

The raw materials used were valued at 16,448,718 gold leva, of which 5,690,681 gold leva (34.61%) were paid for materials of local origin, and 10,753,037 gold leva (65.39%) for imported materials.

(Continued from page 12)

the upkeep of permanent way, new lines, renewals and repairs to rolling stock, and the provision of new stock.

The railways support several technical schools for training personnel for the workshops, running and station staffs.

The British Chamber of Commerce

The British Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce which was founded in 1923, by a number of prominent Bulgarian business men and British subjects who are in business in Sofia, owing to lack of sufficient material and moral support both from Firms in Great Britain and in the country was forced to go into liquidation in January.

The necessity of retaining this institution, however, has appealed to the British community in Sofia. Due to the initiative, taken by several members of the Council of the former chamber (British and Bulgarian), an arrangement has been come to in order to keep the institution alive until it can be placed upon a more solid footing.

A General Meeting of the British Bulgarian chamber was held on the 24th February with the Vice President Mr Charles T. Watkis in the chair. It was finally decided to carry on the work of the old Chamber, and the name be changed to The British Chamber of Commerce for Bulgaria. This was unanimously approved by the meeting.

The following gentlemen were elected as members of the new Committee.

President — Mr Charles Taylor Watkis — Messrs Walkis and Ardash, General representatives of Messrs Ruston Hornsby Ltd., etc., etc.,

Vice President — N. Momtchiloff Esq., Director Bulgarska Bank.

Vice President — P. H. Cayley Esq., Foreign Representative Messrs A. and A. Crompton Ltd, Shaw (near Oldham) Lancs.

Hon. Secretary — Fred. W. Pitt Esq., Director, G. and A. Baker Ltd. General Representative the London Phoenix Insurance Company, Lloyds Agents etc.,

Hon. Treasurer — P. Boyedjief Esq., — of Jordan Boyedjief & Sons, Agents for the B. S. A. motor cycles, etc.,

V- Christoff Esq., The National Bank, correspondent the Morning Post.

M. Douque Esq., — Agent, the Associated British Manufacturers, London.

Bulgaria, with a population of 5,700,000, and yearly imports reaching £10,000,000 is a market not to be neglected by British Manufacturers and Commercial houses. The necessity of the British Chamber of Commerce has been fully justified during the existence of the former Chamber. Over 700 enquiries were received, concerning business prospects, the standing of firms, settling of tariff duties etc. The Bulletin, published monthly, kept British business men interested in Bulgaria with the economic life of the country, what business was offering and the general state of the market etc., Without such an institution, business men would have no means of communication and the consequence would be, valuable business which could be secured, would pass to other countries. British goods hold a high reputation in Bulgaria and has done so for over 40 years. England holds fourth and fifth place in the imports. and could, by more energetic measures being taken rise to first place. It will therefore be fully realised how necessary it is to support the British Chamber of Commerce, which will watch over and protect British interests as far as it is possible to do so.

The Council of the Chamber, invites British Manufacturers and Commercial houses interested in Bulgaria and the Near East to support the Chamber by becoming members. As the material position of the Chamber improves, it will develop accordingly and be of real service to British interests. The Bulletin will be continued to be published, and as hitherto be issued monthly.

The Tobacco Regions and their Origin

BY

Sabi Nenoff

(Continued from Page 13 February issue)

IV. River Tundja Basin. The following tobacco are grown here;

Kazanlik. — In the well known Kazanlik Rose Valley (Valley of Roses) during the last few years tobacco production, has gradually increased and now produces a grade known as „Bashi-Bagli“. On the west there are regions known as Karlovo grades, similar to that of Kazanlik.

Sliven — Kotel. — This is a comparatively new tobacco growing centre, producing the great „Bashi-Bagli“ and „Basma“, quite aromatic and light in weight.

Kavakli. — Also an old tobacco centre and produces „Bashi-Bagli“, a highly aromatic tobacco. In recent years, although it produces an undeveloped or slightly dwarfed leaf it was in big demand by Exporters and local cigarette factories.

The tobacco of the Tundja basin are chiefly termed „demi-Yaka“ and „Pole“. They are generally speaking not so aromatic but are light and pleasant to cigarette smokers.

V. North Bulgaria Regions. The various grades in these regions, are grown upon the northern projections of the Stara Planina mountain range and are exposed to the north winds. The following grades grown should be mentioned:

Deli-Orman. — An old producing center close to the Dobrudja Rumanian frontier. It produces a large leaf grade of „Bashi-Bagli“ of the type „Kaba-Kouiak“ and „Tchiplak-Boaz“.

In the Varna — Provadia districts a low grade tobacco, known as „Bashi-Bagli“ is grown. This same quality is grown in other centres.

Most of the tobaccos grown in North Bulgaria are strong, and at present have a market in Egypt, where it has replaced the China tobaccos which were formerly imported.

At a number of centres experimental work is being carried out and for the production of the higher qualities.

The tobacco production in Bulgaria holds first place in the economic life, and its improvement and stabilization is of the highest importance for the development and prosperity of the country.

The increased tobacco production is inseparably connected with the Exports, as the quantities consumed locally does not exceed 5 to 6 million kilograms per annum, while the normal tobacco crop is approximately 30 million kilograms. Being the main article for export it plays a deciding role in the commercial balance of the country.

In the world production of tobaccos, which exceeds 1,500 million kilograms annually, the production in Bulgaria should not be measured in quantity but taken as a quality, especially since the war, and it has been able to attain and retain a name and prominent place in the highly valued oriental tobaccos.

In our next issue there will be an article reviewing the situation of the tobacco market, the crops of last and preceding year and the future development of this industry.

Banking Amalgamations

During the last twelve months Banking in Bulgaria has undergone several important changes through the fusing of interests, brought about in a measure due to the acute financial and economic crisis, and to the proposed legislation which the Ministry of Finance is introducing into parliament to tighten up and separate legitimate banking as distinct from commerce.

After the war, as in the case of industries, a number of institutions „termed banks“ sprang up like mushrooms, which were in reality trading and commercial houses. The capital and reserves of these so called „banks“ were insignificant but nevertheless they worked with turnovers running into millions of leva. With a fixed rate of interest 16%, plus the additional charges imposed, this interest in reality amounted to anything from 20% upwards.

The large private legitimate Banking Institutions, in Sofia which have branches in the provinces are nine in number. These Banks gave certain facilities to a number of the so called small banks in the way of short and long term loans. In 1928, however, when the crisis began to reach its summit, the failure of several of these so called banks, effected in no small measure the financial stability and to some extent excellerated the position, by creating a nervous atmosphere in financial circles in general. The large and solid banking institutions gradually tightened up their system and became extremely cautious in granting credit or other facilities to clients or commercial houses. One important effect of this action has been that they have been able to sort the chaff from the wheat and as a consequence a number of these institutions as soon as the proposed legislation becomes effective, will be forced to disappear.

The first amalgamation took place in the spring of last year when the Franco-Belge Bank absorbed the Banque „Balkanique“. Both these institutions were financed with foreign capital.

The second fusion of financial interests was in September last year when the Banque de Credit, an offspring of the Disconto Gesellschaft in Berlin, was absorbed by the Deutsche Bank, a branch of the parent bank, also in Berlin. The capital and reserves of the bank is now 50,000,000 leva. This institution plays an important role in financing German made goods and offers most favourable facilities regarding credits and payment.

The latest fusion is that which took place in February when three banks, two of which are purely Bulgarian capital, namely the Bank of National Credit, a subsidiary of the National Insurance Company „Balkan“, the Bulgarska Bank, and the Franco-Bulgarian Bank for International Commerce, united under the title „United Banks“ with a combined capital of 100,000,000 leva (£ 150,000).

A further amalgamation took place during the last week, when three provincial banks in the Vidin District, North western Bulgaria, namely the Banque de Vidin, Banque de Credit de Vidin, and Banque de Belogradtchik, amalgamated under the name „Banque Générale de Vidin“. This fusion has been favourably received in financial circles, and will receive the full support of the National Bank.

It is anticipated that within the next few months further amalgamations will take place both in Sofia, and Banking Institutions in the provincial centres.

Financial and Commercial

Trade and General Conditions — March

The much discussed issue of Bulgarian reparations has been settled in a way which, from the business point of view, may be considered satisfactory. The future reparations burden has been considerably reduced and it is to be hoped that this settlement will have a favourable effect on Bulgaria's credit abroad and on business prospects in the country.

Although imports seem to have dropped to almost unprecedented low levels, foreign trade figures continue to shew an adverse balance which on December 31st 1929, amounted to 2,040,000,000 leva. Liquid money is scarce and the credit system is heavily tied up. Suspension of payments and failures have reached considerable proportions and the stagnation in sales of tobacco and other agricultural produce is likely to continue for some months to come. Bills protested during 1929 amounted to levas 342 536,000 as against levas 120 669,000 during the same month in 1928.

Business is slack all over the country. Leather products, metals, ironware and chemicals are inactive. Owing to this depressed condition of the market, local industries are considerably reducing their orders for raw material abroad. However, the increasing number of tenders invited for the supply of railway materials may constitute a fair compensation for the loss.

The „Textile“ Joint Stock Company, Varna, which has been manufacturing cotton tissues, has now been granted new industrial privileges for cotton yarn spinning. Up to the present their output has been entirely used for their own needs, but it will probably begin selling their yarns on the market in the early spring.

The first symptoms for a change for the better may be seen in the growing tendency for concentration of financial and industrial concerns.

Three of the chief purely local banks, the Banque-Franco-Bulgare pour la Commerce International, the Banque de Credit National, and the Buigarska Banka have decided to amalgamate into a new Joint Stock Company, the „Union de Banques Bulgares“ with a paid up capital of leva 100,000,000. This concentration will very probably have a widely beneficial effect on the local credit position, as well as on the improvement of business conditions especially in the provinces where the large foreign banks have no branches.

Another beneficial consequence of the crisis will be the important amendments to banking, commercial and especially bankruptcy legislation, which will be voted in the near future. The interests of foreign creditors will thus enjoy a far greater and much more efficient protection, a circumstance which will no doubt have a favourable reaction on Bulgarian credit abroad.

Trade Balance for 1929

During the year 1929 the imports amounted to 7,659,971,012 leva and exports 5,928,892,824 leva. Tobacco occupied first place in the exports with 2,643,527,724 leva, followed by eggs — 709,079,830 leva, cereals — 500,000,000 hides and skins — 266,000,000 and Atter of Rose 255 millions. The remaining exports consisted of cattle, sunflower and oil seeds, fowls etc.

From the above figures it will be seen that imports exceeded exports by 1,731,087,188 leva,

During 1928 imports totalled 6,440,628,734 leva and exports 5,729,189,701 leva.

The deficit in the commercial balance in 1929 exceeds that of 1928 with 1,619,639,416 leva.

Shipping

37 vessels of a total of 66,272 tons entered and cleared the Port of Burgas, on the Black Sea, during the month of January. Of this number six were British with a tonnage of 11,216. During February 35 vessels entered and cleared the port. There has been a considerable decline in shipping both at the Ports of Varna and Burgas during the first two months of the present year as compared with the same period in 1929. Exports fell very considerably owing to prices abroad being too low to allow sales being effected for grain and malze etc.

The Crops

Reports received from throughout the country concerning the winter crops are favourable. With the exceptionally mild winter which was accompanied with rains in various sections during February the crops are promising. In the southern province agriculturists were able to prepare their lands for the spring planting and provided the weather conditions continue and there are no heavy frosts during the next two weeks, planting will be completed several weeks earlier than previous years and the crops will have a start before the hot weather sets in,

Export of Eggs

During the month of January, 1,992 cases of eggs were exported, as compared with 1371 cases in January 1928. A large part of this export went to Germany. Owing to the mild winter in parts of Soviet Russia a large quantity of eggs were available and placed on the European markets. On account of this the price per case fell from 230 to 170 Swiss francs, and in consequence effected the export price of Bulgarian eggs very considerably. The heavy drop in prices will adversely effect the trade balance. In 1929 eggs represented 12.8% of the total exports followed by tobacco which was 43%, and cereals 11.6%. In 1929 the value of this export was 750,000,000 leva.

Prior to the great war the export of eggs were:

	In million kilograms
1906	12.6
1907	12.43
1908	8.09
1909	9.02
1910	10.99
1911	14.66
1912	14.37

During the years preceding the Balkan wars (1912-13) Bulgarian eggs were in big demand, especially in Germany were easily placed. With the satisfactory prices received this not only encouraged the peasants to improve their poultry breeds etc., but was a big source of revenue to the State and practically stabilised the trade balance. Since the wars several important markets were lost and this export has been more or less unstable,

**List of the more important articles imported from England
during 1927, and 1928.**

COMMODITY	1927		1928	
	Quantity in Kilograms	Value in levs	Quantity in Kilograms	Value in levs
Glucose	12,017	146,300	—	—
Coffee	155,430	9,638 270	111,536	6,081 600
Tea	6,709	834,895	14,141	1,693,500
Black pepper	13,519	1,005,383	34,884	3,828,410
Mustard	783	103,445	—	—
Biscuits, sugared	532	71,740	—	—
Coke, metallurgical	20,000	52,000	1,605,612	2,082,830
Sodium bicarbonate	260,303	2,391,440	—	—
Caustic soda	531,213	6,428,850	218,233	2,713,250
Sal ammoniac	22,102	502,550	8,731	142,500
Copper sulphate	2,532,115	42,956,524	2,653,732	48,472,710
Sulphur, rod or powder	4,398	72,880	—	—
Glycerine	11,106	532,340	—	—
Chemical products	27,993	1,237,680	—	—
Colman's blue	12,525	759,956	—	—
Aniline & alizarine dyes	1,986	627,860	1,472	265,300
Mineral oils	21,078	336,800	19,965	347,235
Varnish	110,689	3,191,955	130,904	3,524,245
Cocoa and palm oil	73,094	2,035,450	130,986	3,651,500
Cotton seed oil for industrial purposes	10,244	284,000	—	—
Fish oil	18,171	410,990	—	—
Tallow for industrial purposes	16,405	5,320,250	115,828	3,272,300

Société Française pour le Commerce des Tabacs

Manipulation and Export of Oriental Tobaccos

Head Office — Rue Mogador № 20 — Paris

Branch Offices — Bulgaria — Rue Aksakoff № 14 Sofia

— Turkey — Palazzo Karakeuy, Stamboul

— Greece — Cavalla

Large Warehouses in the Principal Manipulating Centres